that a foreign vessels namely "Alondra Rainbow' containing highly sensitive cargo seized by the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard was released by Government of Maharashtra on receipt of rupees ten crores;

(b) whether the Central Government permitted the State Government to release the foreign vessel;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the action proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The pirated vessel "Alondra Rainbow" was apprehended on 16.11.1999 by the Coast Guard and the Navy and the vessel along with the crew was handed over to the Mumbai Police on 21.11.1999 for further investigation. The said vessel was released under the orders of Court dated 22.1.2000, after receipt of a safe deposit of Rs. 1 crore by the court. The apprehended crew continue to be in judicial custody.

Introduction of LDCE in ACSO's grades of AFHQ Civil Service

3382. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to answer to Unstarred Question 2659 given in Rajya Sabha on 23rd December 1998 and state:

(a) whether the notification for implementing the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission has since been issued;

(b) if not, the details of action taken during the last 14 months; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken for notifying the amendments to ensure participation of eligible persons in the examination to be held in the year 2000?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Recruitment Rules of AFHQ Civil Service incorporating the LDCE provision has been approved by the Department of Personnel and Training and is under consideration of the UPSC. The Rules will be notified on clearance from UPSC and other agencies involved, including Ministry of Law.